

✧ HEROES GET REMEMBERED ✧

# *Legends Never Die*

## *~ Tributes to Jack Cherry ~*

### **Neil Dahlstrom**

#### **Branded Properties and Heritage Manager, John Deere**

I can't remember exactly when we first met, but I do know that I knew Jack for exactly twenty years. I know the year because I joined the John Deere Archives in 2001. I was the first hire in the department since 1979, and came in with no previous connection to John Deere. (I would learn later that I'm a fourth generation John Deere employee). Besides the three existing Archives employees, there were three contractors in the office. They spent their day retrieving large record books and transcribing the information into a database, one line at a time. It was a project of the Two-Cylinder Club, and the transcription of two-cylinder tractor build records, as I came to learn, was wrapping up.

I met Jack Cherry before the 2002 Two-Cylinder Expo, but it was on the grounds of Hawkeye Community College that I first learned who Jack was. Another Archives employee and I got out of the car and began to walk towards a row of restored tractors. Jack began walking out to meet us. That's when I saw heads go up, people stopping their conversations and making a path to get to Jack before someone else could. I've since compared it to being at Woodstock! That was the first time I saw with my own eyes what it meant to be in the John Deere ecosphere. And I didn't know what to make of it. It was intimidating and incredible at the same time.

Jack took it in stride, of course. He seemed to know everything, or at least where to find it. In my business (archives), the latter is the most important thing. People would ask questions, and he would point them in the right direction, or share some obscure tidbit that answered their question. I was a fish out of water, but it was what Jack was born to do.

Over the upcoming years, Jack took me under his wing. On regular visits to the Archives, he showed me how to read build records from Waterloo, Dubuque, and Mannheim. He counseled me on what records remained frustratingly elusive (like certain build codes that remain unknown to this day), especially the ones that he had once seen on his dad's desk in Waterloo, which had seemed to not have made their way to the Archives.

After many years of friendship and mentorship, a few things stand out for me. One, is that Jack always knew everyone in the John Deere Archives. Whether a long-term employee, intern, contractor, etc., he brought cake for birthdays, joined us for lunch, talked tractors, cars, and so much more. He even listened to me drone on about my Chicago Cubs and pretended to be interested.

Second, and most important to me, has much to do with the "hobby" that he loved so much. To me, being a John Deere collector, or fan, or whatever you want to call it, is a lifestyle. It's in your DNA. And it was in his DNA. No matter what was going on, Jack always showed up. When he received a complaint about a count being off as compared to previous research, or tried to solve a long-standing assumption, I trusted his research and his work. And that's because he showed up and tediously and manually counted, recounted, compared, recounted, searched for context, and did the best he could with the information that was available.

In 2018, Jack came to town for an overnight research stay. It was rare he stayed overnight, but there was much to do. Fortunately, that meant we could have dinner. He was insistent that my son, who was eight at the time, join us. John Deere did not have great meaning for my son, but by the end of the night Jack converted him into a fan. Jack wanted to share his knowledge and his joy with those around him — and it was infectious. It's his undeniable legacy, and I feel privileged to have called him my friend.

### **Joel E. Janssen, D.D.S., P.C.**

#### **Nebraska**

Dear Family,

I truly mean my greeting, as this is stated FAMILY. I have had the privilege to know Jack Cherry for more than 20-plus years of Two-Cylinder Expos.

My first experience with placing a tractor for display was a "420" John Deere that I had really worked hard to make "perfect." The application requested a photo of the front, a photo of the back, side photo, side photo, top. All were processed from a 35mm camera with color film.

I waited to get back my acceptance, but instead got the response, "If you promise to make the black muffler silver, I'll let you into the Expo." So, I spray painted with silver muffler paint and by the time I loaded up after the show the paint was already peeling. By the time the next Expo rolled around, I had found a rolling bead blaster which strips off all the surface to base metal. I then used high-temp clear coat and had the perfect muffler! Year two Jack asked, "How did you do that?" Of course, I shared the technique with him!

As time progressed, a group of four families from Papillion, Nebraska, were bringing detailed Expo-Quality tractors to the Expos every event; something new every year. At one of the

last “meets” we still had three tractors apart and no finished photos. I called Jack and told him we were finishing up and asked what he needed for entry information. His comment was, “Tell me what and how many you are bringing; I know what you guys do and your attention to detail. I’ll check you in when you get here.”

You might feel Jack had mellowed in 20 years; however, I realized we had raised our goals to match his expectations!

I’ll miss his Cheshire Cat smile as he’d remark on our displays, talk of firearms, and pull out a little of our personal life in his subtle manner.

We all remember the hardest teacher we had in school as being the best teacher as we looked backwards. That’s Jack Cherry — the *best* teacher. Love to all.

## **Paul L. Olson**

**Iowa**

Some people leave this earth and you miss them and think of them, but others are different. Jack was different. You see, I wasn’t with Jack my entire life, but the moments we shared were precious. He just had a very unique way of impressing people.

I vividly remember my first encounter with Jack — it was a Tuesday before Expo. I had an “830” that I hauled to the Cattle Congress Grounds in Waterloo, Iowa, for my very first time of exhibiting. I had gotten there early and didn’t “know the ropes.” There were a few guys sitting on a flat rack. I walked over, introduced myself, and asked where I could unload. This one guy gets up and saunters over to my tractor (now mind you, this tractor is a perfect 10), looks it over and says, “There’s a salvage yard north of town five miles; take it up there.” He (Jack) turned and walked away and after a few steps turned back around and looked at me with that devilish grin he was so good at. My first impression, I can’t explain why, is I knew Jack was my kind of guy. I guess you could say he and I bonded right there.

I was so disheartened when I heard he had passed. I was in process of getting a tractor and plow ready for Expo 26 in 2022 and wanted so badly to share it. Then came the announcement in *Two-Cylinder* that we were going to have an Expo after all! One to honor Jack — how wonderful!

Count me in on this one! You hear us Jack? I miss you man! Your friend for life!

## **Leopold Click**

**West Virginia**

I met Jack back in 2012, first by phone in the discussion of my tractor that I would be entering in the Two-Cylinder Club Expo of that year. The tractor is a 1010 Row-Crop (R) with the Roll-O-Matic tricycle front end. My dad had purchased the tractor brand new in October of 1964. Jack stated that they never had that type of configuration at one of the Expos, and that he was interested to see the exhibit once the event rolled around.

Once the 2012 Expo XXII came into play, my dad, uncle, and of course, myself, transported the 1010 from West Vir-

ginia to the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo, Iowa. We arrived early so we were able to pick a spot that we liked to display our tractor. Once I got everything in line and detailed, I ran into Jack in front of the Pavilion. I introduced myself and he remembered me right away, and my tractor that we discussed prior to the Expo. He looked at me and asked where I had set up my display. I told him and he motioned for me to jump in to his golf cart and accompany him with a ride to my display area. When we arrived at my tractor, Jack was so nice and professional about it all. First, he complimented the paint job, then the attention to decal placement, and how intricately detailed everything was right down to the spark plug wires. He stated that the tractor looked like a little 4010, and he could tell that we had worked hard on the restoration and to be very proud of it. Well, I received the Two-Cylinder Expo-Quality Award that year and the whole experience was worth it. Jack was so full of passion and knowledge about John Deere and the hobby at hand. What a great guy and a compassionate human being. You’ll be missed my friend, and I thank the Lord I had the honor of meeting you.

## **Roy Hofer**

**Oregon**

I was honored to meet Jack at an Expo about ten years ago. Since then I was able to visit with Jack on multiple occasions over the phone. He was a true supporter of my restoration projects. His vast knowledge of John Deere equipment will be sincerely missed.

As a younger member and Northwest region Ambassador, I hope to help keep the club going for many years to come.

## **Dan Resh**

**Pennsylvania**

On July third, 2021, at about 4:00 in the afternoon, I was sitting beside a pool. A friend of mine and his family invited me to go along to a relative’s home for a Fourth of July picnic. This picnic is always combined with a birthday party for his nephew, who turned thirteen this year. The weather that day was beautiful, being cooler and less humid after a week of mid-ninety-degree days. A bright blue sky, with picture-perfect white clouds, and a light, comfortable breeze moving through the edge-of-the-woods property, made it a perfect day. After getting out of the pool, I checked my phone only to see a notification that Brenda had texted me. Upon opening this text, I learned that Jack Cherry had died that morning.

As a teenager in the last two years of the 1980s, somehow, I had heard about the Two-Cylinder Club. I say somehow, because unlike now, at that time there was no internet and information about an organization halfway across the country from rural Pennsylvania was much harder to locate. I likely heard about the Club from someone else in a tractor organization or from some kind of print ad which may have appeared in an antique tractor publication. To this day, I still have no idea how I found out about the Club or its leaders. I probably wrote to them, expressing interest in it and how to join, and got a reply with instructions on how to do so. Using a bit of

my hard-earned money, at something like \$3.62 an hour, I paid for my first year's membership and subscription to *Two-Cylinder* magazine.

It was early October of 1990 when my first magazine arrived, the September-October issue. Pictured on the cover was an "Exhibit B" Model "D" John Deere Tractor in fully restored glory. On the back cover, was a similar tractor, an "Exhibit A", Model "D" John Deere Tractor appearing on the plains of Montana in much the same condition as the "Exhibit B" Tractor on the front cover did before an extensive restoration. Waldo Morstad was the owner of both of these tractors and in text conversations with Jack sometime over the past year, he told me about that photo shoot. He mentioned that it took him and Waldo around five hours to get the tractor out to the right spot on Waldo's ranch, get it and the camera equipment set up, wait on the proper lighting, and, finally, take the photos that appeared in my first *Two-Cylinder* magazine.

I read that first magazine in one or two evenings, and proceeded to read it again countless times. I had portions of Jack's feature article memorized, and even read the classified ads every time I read the magazine again. Only a teenager, with an overzealous interest in a subject, can devote that kind of energy to such repetition. My second magazine came a couple months later and I read it and many of those that followed, with the same zeal and attentiveness with which I read the first. As I did, I began to feel a connection with this person writing these feature articles and providing what even a teenager could recognize as "first-hand" information to the readers. As the years passed, readers occasionally got a glimpse of the man behind those feature articles in a rare photo. Thinking back over these years and all of the issues I have from that first one until the latest, I think I only saw Jack's picture in the magazine a couple times. Through the feature articles, and his comments on letters to the editor, often answering questions posed, I learned a little more about this person.

While I was in high school, I dreamed of going to a Two-Cylinder Expo. I even had figured out what it would cost (driving my dream vehicle at the time of an early 1960s GMC pickup with a 305E V-6 and four speed manual in it), to make the trip. Once I had cost projections in mind, I even tried to talk a couple of my friends into going with me. As things often go, I never did get to Iowa for an Expo as a teenager or even a twenty-something. It would be the final Expo, in 2015, before I would get to Waterloo, and though I hoped to meet both Jack and Brenda, both were so busy, and I was so busy looking at the exhibits, that it wasn't possible. I left that show disappointed that it would be the only one I'd get to attend but, at the same time, happy to have finally made it there.

My first article was published in *Two-Cylinder* magazine in the September-October issue of 2018, some twenty-eight years after joining the club as a teenager. As I write this, I'm finding it an amazing coincidence for my first article to be published in the same bi-monthly issue as the first one I received. Some time before that first article was published, I had sent a different article to Jack, in care of Two-Cylinder, in hopes that it would be interesting enough to merit publication. The scope of that article was a bit too far outside of the John Deere product line. Much of the information I sent was relat-

ed to Detroit Diesel engines, having read an article in an earlier issue of *Two-Cylinder* written by Dave Mello about his experiences with those engines. Jack sent me an email regarding the material I sent, explaining the situation and asking me if I had other stories or subjects of interest to write about. He also asked both then, and later, if I could write a more formal article on Detroit Diesel engines, their development, history, and how they were used in John Deere equipment for a later issue of *Two-Cylinder*, which I did.

As I thought about Jack's request, and my own experiences and stories I'd heard from my grandfather about our farm and John Deere Tractors, I felt that I may have several stories I could write and began putting together what would become the articles I've written to the present day. After sending my first article to Jack, I got the only phone call I ever got from him. This would've been some time in the spring of 2017, probably late April or early May, and I remember a deep voice that was friendly and happy to talk to me. Jack owned property in Idaho, and was calling me from there, explaining how he'd come to buy the property and telling me about it and how much he enjoyed the fresh air after a career working in John Deere's foundry. He gave me all of his phone numbers and said I was to call anytime. He then asked me about my day, what I was doing, and what Pennsylvania was like that day. I remember that the weather was nice and sunny and he had called me around ten am. After some more conversation, we said goodbye and continued with our day.

I began a habit of emailing Jack, and, after a while, texting with him on an almost daily basis. I don't know why I never called on a regular basis after that first time. It's possible that six months or almost a year went by before I thought I needed to call him again; we were emailing or texting and just didn't bother with voice calls. Jack sent me an email back explaining that he was with a friend the previous evening when I called and they were reloading some rifle ammunition. Brenda had told him that I have a pretty significant hearing loss. Jack explained to me that he'd been having a lot of trouble with his voice; that he was no longer able to talk very loud on the phone and was afraid that the combination of my crummy hearing and his quiet voice wouldn't work well. We decided after that, to use texting as our form of communication.

As mentioned earlier, our texts were on an almost daily basis, or at least five out of every seven days. Sometimes they consisted of a "hello" sent back and forth. Other times entire conversations would ensue about any subject ranging from the weather, to tractors, to politics, to rifles, handguns, or ammunition. I quickly learned that Jack was much more knowledgeable about any kind of gun than I am and found some of his information fascinating. He had explained several rifle cartridges to me, all of which I've forgotten, and told me about his love for long-distance target shooting and quality rifles. We would often talk about the weather and what crops were like in Pennsylvania and Iowa or how harvest was going if I happened to be in the middle of apple season.

At least once a month, I'd tell him about something I was working on in the shop, a tractor, truck, or piece of equipment, and he'd often tell me to make sure I was taking plenty of pictures and keeping the information organized in my mind so I

could use it for an article. With every published article, I'd send an email or a series of texts thanking him for publishing it, grateful that he felt my material fit to be used. I know that he especially liked the articles that told a story and was always telling me to develop more like that.

Our love of nature and the outdoors became a talking point, and we'd often send pictures to each other of our surroundings. I sent him pictures from the farm, a friend's cabin in northern Pennsylvania, and from my snowboarding trips. He sent pictures from his property in Idaho and sometimes from the drive to and from there. The mountain backdrops in his photos from Idaho were breathtaking; no wonder he enjoyed being there so much. Last summer, while in northern Pennsylvania, I sent him a picture of a black bear as it was at a feeder at a neighboring cabin. Jack enjoyed seeing that picture and commented on how big the bear was and how close; it was about twenty-five yards from me.

As last year moved on, and Jack had to deal with recovery from an assault and the resulting surgery last summer, it became more apparent to me that he enjoyed our texts as much as I did. The daily texts continued, often happening during apple harvest or grain harvest as I waited in line with the truck. When I learned that his health was beginning to deteriorate as a result of the 2020 attack, we continued talking...about everything except that. Jack eventually told me that he considered me "family" and once or twice asked me what I thought of a subject he was considering for a feature article in *Two-Cylinder*. Brenda told me at one point that I "kept his mind occupied" and that he truly liked and respected me.

There's one unique aspect to the relationship that Jack and I had, however. I never met him in person, nor have I yet met anyone associated with *Two-Cylinder* magazine. The Two-Cylinder Expo that was scheduled for 2021 was where I hoped to change that, but ultimately, that Expo had to be cancelled because of continuing concerns about COVID. After the Expo was cancelled, I thought that perhaps I would get to travel out to Iowa this summer to visit, but I wasn't able to do so before Jack's passing and, as I write this, still haven't been able to. The adage that says to "live in the present" and that "tomorrow isn't promised" rings in my mind these days. How I wish that I'd gotten to meet this person whom I've known only in print since that autumn of 1990.

As I look at my *Two-Cylinder* magazines, and read any of the feature articles, Jack still lives through those words and the comments he provided throughout the publication. Every piece of material that the Two-Cylinder Club has printed since September–October of 1990 is in my collection and I've read most of it twice. I told Jack different times how much I appreciated the first-hand knowledge he had due to his employment with John Deere and through his father's tenure with the company. Imagine how many famed engineers and notable company personalities may have graced Jack's home and life throughout his youth and adulthood. This man knew or met the people who gave us the tractors we collect and restore, and many of their components. He had a part in the production of the castings in any of the Waterloo-built New Generation Tractors. Furthermore, he recognized a need for an organization dedicated to antique John Deere Tractors and

care enough to put forth the resources and work to allow the Two-Cylinder Club to continue.

My dad used to work for a company in York, Pennsylvania, that builds turbines for hydro power generation. An older fellow employee of his was an exceptional welder and could weld cast iron so well that it was impossible to tell that it had been broken. When this gentleman was still welding, Dad took a few pieces from the farm, all from 3010 or 3020 Tractors to him that had been broken. He repaired them all, with success, and told Dad that it was some of the best cast iron he'd ever welded.

Pride of workmanship used to be a thing in this country and the people in John Deere's foundry division obviously took pride in their work, producing some of the best gray metal in the world. Jack was a part of that effort for thirty years. It takes exceptional people to produce exceptional products. Jack was exceptional, not only in his career with John Deere, but also in this magazine, only producing the best. John Deere's proclamation that "I will never put my name on a plow which does not have in it the best that is in me," could also be applied to Two-Cylinder. Jack, Brenda, and their team, have always given us the best, and for that, I'm honored to be considered "family." I express my thanks to Jack for fulfilling the dreams of a teenage boy to be part of the best antique tractor club in the world and for becoming a close friend. Godspeed Jack. What a pleasure it's been!

## Wayne Collins

Dubuque (Iowa) Engineer, Retired

My personal acquaintance with Jack is from three occasions: One was when the Expo was held at Peosta, Iowa, at the NICC campus, and featured Dubuque-built tractors. I still wear the cap from that event.

Another was when I visited your offices on Main Street in Grundy Center. Jack gave me a "John Deere" clock which adorns my woodworking shop.

Third, was when I was able to lend a photo album of custom-built industrial and construction machines of many colors, from the Dubuque Custom Engineering Group where I worked. They were used in an issue of *Two-Cylinder*.

## Richard Henningsen

Iowa

We all know what a loss Jack's death was to Two-Cylinder. His knowledge was gained through years of experience. From a young age, he learned from his dad, Lyle, and then through his own employment. It just wasn't a job to him; he retained everything he learned. He passed his knowledge along to Brenda and the Two-Cylinder staff. They will miss him the most.

I will miss him as a friend. My daughter, Kelli, knew him as the father to one of her friends. The girls lost contact with each other; however, Jack remained a friend. Kellie later had contact with Jack when her place of employment purchased the former Two-Cylinder building. Although I've been a member of the Two-Cylinder Club since 1990, my friendship with Jack came from a mutual interest in firearms. At Kelli's place of employment, she now stands behind the counter

where Jack once stood. Sometimes when I go in I will jokingly say to her, "I want to talk to Jack." Her answer is, "Jack isn't here anymore." Those are words we will now all have to accept. We will miss you, Jack.

## Dale Berns Nebraska

I was yet a kid when I met Jack in 1982; I had interest in John Deere Tractors and 45-70 caliber rifles. We would shoot 10-gauge mag shotguns for kicks. I guess he found that amusing. The thing about Jack that was really astonishing was that he would take the time to listen to and talk to a young person about a tractor or other subject. He gave me some real good, solid advice over the years. He would always have his camera, note pad, and quality pen ready when he would visit my dad and his collection. He taught me how to make notes about a subject that were brief, but informative. His encouragement in doing this has served me not only in tractor collecting, but in other areas of life as well. He saved a great deal of John Deere history from being lost, and he will be missed.

## John Langer Utah

From the magazine to the Expo... It's hard to imagine Two-Cylinder without Jack. In 1994, between the ages of eight and nine, I spent a year helping my dad restore our 1927 Model "D" Tractor. We worked in the shop over countless evenings, disassembling the tractor down to its crankcase before building it back to show quality. When we arrived in Grundy Center for Expo V in the summer of 1995, I was so excited to share everything I had learned about the Model "D" over the course of the previous year. Jack Cherry stopped by our exhibit on the first day of the event while making the rounds. I remember sitting on the seat of the Model "D", listening intently as Jack chatted with my dad and other exhibitors about the various tractors of note that year. Jack then took some time to look over my tractor and asked me questions about the restoration and my contribution to it. It's been twenty-six years and I can still remember the sense of pride I felt talking about my tractor with the editor of *Two-Cylinder* magazine. We talked about how I had spent hours with needle-nose pliers straightening the damaged fins in the radiator core. How I had cut out the engine gaskets and polished the brass serial number plate to a mirror-like shine. We even talked about how I had touched up the tips of the lugs with John Deere Yellow paint on the day of the event. Jack let me (a 9-year-old kid) chat his ear off for what must have been half an hour. He always took the time to appreciate the hard work that exhibitors put into their restorations. His praise was greatly appreciated, and his opinions always respected. Next year's Expo — a tribute to Jack — will be the first event that my two children will attend. Like so many other young tractor enthusiasts at Expo XXVI, they will learn about the quirks, details, and interesting tidbits of Two-Cylinder lore that Jack has shared over the years. They will see what it takes to make a tractor "Expo-Quality" and hopefully walk away begging their Grandpa Greg to spend a summer in the shop restoring



an antique tractor of their own. I have no doubt that Jack's archive of articles and decades of imparted knowledge will continue to inspire future generations of tractor enthusiasts for many years to come. He will be greatly missed by the antique tractor community, his readers, and friends alike.

## Danny Witter Pennsylvania

My memories of Jack Cherry take us back to 1986/87. I can't remember exactly when they asked people to send pictures of items they would like to display for approval for the 150th Anniversary celebration. I sent in my JD "630" Propane Standard for review that I had purchased from Den-



nis Hunt in Tennessee. I was very happy when Jack called to tell me it had been accepted to be displayed. My dad, "not so much!" This was during our wheat harvest in south-central Pennsylvania. Dad had a fit, that both myself and my brother, were going to the show. We worked all day and half the nights before and after the show dates. We even had matching John Deere coveralls made for the event. We drove all night



to get there and all night to get back home sooner for the harvest. Oh, to be in our 20s and 30s once more! Once dad got the check for the wheat harvest, we were one big happy family again.

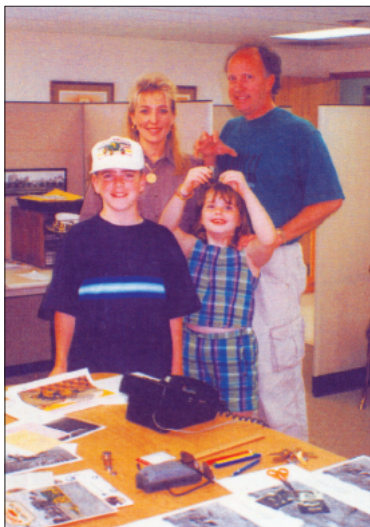
I'm sure some of the people that were there will remember the picture. We got a lot of comments and even some free admission to JD tours, etc. because of those custom-made coveralls. We still have the 150th keepsakes, like the tote bag

pictured. The "630" propane was a big hit and ERTL even measured it for the 1:43 scale toy they made from it. We never cared for the skinny 18" front wheels, so we installed the wider 10.00 x 15" front tires when we restored it. We also went from the 16.9" to 18" rear tires just because it is what we preferred. Jack will always be a part of our fondest John Deere memories.



### Greg Langer Minnesota

Dear Brenda and friends at Two-Cylinder, My family and I were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Jack. I was fortunate to meet Jack during the set up of the first tractor Expo at Waterloo, Iowa, and have been pleased to call him a friend ever since. His stories about life growing up around the tractor factories and knowing the engineers were amazing. I wish that I could hear them all



again. I believe that his story-telling skills were remarkable!

Jack showed his softer side when he (and you!) took the time to show extra interest in my son, John, and daughter, Rebecca, when we restored and displayed their Model "D" and Model "GP" Tractors at the Expos over the years. We'll keep the memories of his kindness forever in our minds.

We'll remember the visits to your offices in Grundy Center with our family with fondness. I was blessed with many early morning breakfast appointments in Grundy Center with Jack. There's a chance that some of the information shared was more fiction than fact.

My family and I will truly miss our friend. We all wish him rest. We wish all of you peace and good health.

### Justin Kutka Wisconsin

The news of Jack Cherry's death came as a shock to me. I feel compelled to share some of the experiences I recall from the times our paths crossed. In 2003, I had a short stint working for Two-Cylinder, just after graduating from college. That's where I got to know Jack and develop a respect for him.

One of the things Jack said to me when I first started, and would repeat fairly often, is that, "We start with excellence, and we work our way up from there." While he would say it with a slightly detectable chuckle and a twinkle in his eye, he really wasn't joking about this. That was his expectation. It permeated his existence. To him, there was no point in doing something if it wasn't world-class.

Jack was crazy smart, probably too smart for his own good, sometimes. It was apparent that Jack was usually doing mental laps around you when you were struggling to walk a straight line. He was thinking next year when everyone else was mired in today. He asked often if I was "tracking with him"; sometimes I thought I was keeping up. Sometimes I knew better.

One thing that did, however, become clear to me pretty quickly was the equivalence between "Two-Cylinder Magazine," "Two-Cylinder Expo," and Jack Cherry: a world-class publication, a world-class event, and I don't think there was anyone else who could have made those things what they were. He poured his heart and soul into the magazine, and it was evident. The quality of the product was second to none, in the materials, layout and subject matter, but also in the historical accuracy, attention to detail, and responsibility to authenticity that the information was provided with; a legacy which continues unabated to this day.

As for the Two-Cylinder Expos, they inspired more than one collector to go the extra mile with their tractor restorations and helped coin the term "Expo-Quality" to mean a tractor restoration that rose above the rest. Every year at the Expo, you could hear people remark that the "tractors just keep getting better" from the previous year. This was Jack's goal. For the Two-Cylinder Expo in 2022, I'm really looking forward to seeing that passion once again come to life, this time in Jack's memory. Let's make this Expo one he would be proud of.

Jack was generous, but not in the most obvious of ways. When I worked for him, a place to live was part of the package. Many days he'd make lunch; I was invited to the table. He was a teacher; but not in a way that allowed anyone to just sit back and receive. If one was engaged and could offer a desire to learn and ask challenging questions, he was a fountain of knowledge. Sometimes, he would show you the path of his thinking and even bring out the documents that proved the point beyond a shadow of a doubt. Other times, you had to take his word for it. This was sometimes a tricky proposition, as he also got a kick out of pulling your chain.

Sometimes, this led to an aura of mystery about him. There were, naturally, documents that were off-limits to me as a wet-behind-the-ears tractor-nut want-to-be editor. But I saw it as well with calls that came in to the office from Club members: people would want to know some piece of information, and sometimes they got a straight answer, sometimes they didn't. When they didn't, most of the time it was due to a definitive answer not being readily available; often the best Jack or anyone could do was to hazard an educated guess.

I can tell you first hand that the name recognition and notoriety Jack earned in his position could be very stressful and it took a toll on him over the years, both physically and mentally. As a fundamentally private individual, it was difficult to also be a luminary in the hobby. To that end, Jack could be very

enigmatic, almost to the point of evasiveness, but he was also a crowd-pleaser and entertainer, too. I think he enjoyed those roles almost as much as he craved solitude. There's no doubt that Jack was a complicated person. He defied being put into any box. There will never be another just like him; he was unique. Trying to compare him to others would be unfair to both parties.

I think possibly the greatest legacy that Jack will leave behind is the state of the antique John Deere Tractor hobby worldwide. He didn't invent it, and it would have thrived even if he had never become involved with it, but I think it would have been a different, flatter landscape without his involvement. There wouldn't be the same emphasis on historical accuracy, period correctness, or high-end restorations. Directly related to these priorities, the market for low-production tractors, scarce original and high-quality reproduction parts, and professional restoration services would be significantly less; there would be fewer individuals able to make their living with these old machines. I think it's safe to say that the contribution from Jack and Two-Cylinder to the hobby has been consequential.

When I came to work for Two-Cylinder, I had an inkling of what I was getting into, but I never realized how immersive an experience it would be. I learned about much more than just John Deere. I got an education in the publishing business, high-end rifles, interpersonal relationships, and life in general.

I'm indebted to the experiences I had over this short period; they influenced who I am as a person, even to this day, almost 20 years later.

I heard it said once again recently that it's the tractors that get you involved, but it's the people that make you stay. And I think that's true. Jack is a standout among the many people that I have been fortunate enough to meet through this hobby. It was a pleasure knowing you, Jack. You'll be missed.

## **Seth Flanders** Colorado

I first got to know Jack back in 2016 when I emailed him a question about a particular rifle cartridge with which I'd had some experience. Jack responded promptly and not only with very detailed information, but with a few interesting stories from his own experiences with this cartridge. As we continued to correspond it became evident that Jack possessed a knowledge of firearms and ammunition which stretched well beyond the keyboard "experts" one finds online and even surpassed that of professional writers who fill the pages of various gun magazines. It wasn't just the knowledge Jack possessed which made him special... it was the man himself. He quickly became a mentor and friend of mine who gave advice on topics other than firearms and although our friendship was entirely through text and email, I felt as if he were right there sharing his wisdom and sense of humor. I consider those who knew Jack in person to be very lucky. He not only shared his wisdom freely, he embodied a lot of the values which seemed to have been lost among many of the younger generations. It is up to all of us who knew him to remind ourselves that in this world of billions, a few stand out and Jack was one of them.

## **Walt Menegus** New Jersey

It was a sad day when I received a phone call from Brenda telling me about the passing of Jack Cherry. I have been a member to the Two-Cylinder Club since the mid-1980s, when the newsletter was just a few pages stapled together. Many Two-Cylinder Club members know who I am. Our family has been involved in farming, working on tractors and equipment, as well as collecting tractors and raising produce. I have been to several Two-Cylinder Expos, and witnessed firsthand how Jack would race around to make sure everything was correct and running smoothly for the show. I really did not know Jack very well; however, I remember one Expo at the Hawkeye Community College (I think 2002), when a Two-Cylinder Club member from Hopewell, New Jersey, unloaded and drove a steel-wheeled John Deere Tractor across the beautifully manicured lawn with new, deep-spade lugs digging into and ripping up the turf. Jack came out of nowhere and let the Exhibitor know that this was not tolerated and certainly not approved behavior for any event of which he was in charge, and that it would not happen again. That's how and when I discovered Jack's true character; a true stand-up kind of guy. And it didn't matter if it was one person, several individuals, or an entire group that wanted to ignore or "bend" the rules; they were met with the same expectations that they were to conduct themselves in a dignified and civil manner. If you wanted to be a problem or a disruptor, be guaranteed he would take the necessary corrective measures to ensure that the problem(s) would not occur again.

I introduced myself and my son, Jason, and said we were also from New Jersey. I went on to explain that along with attending the Expo, that Jason had just graduated from high school, and we were going to tour the West and go prairie dog hunting. Right away, the question from Jack was, "What type of rifles do you have?" Game over... at that point there was no more talk about John Deere Tractors and Equipment, it was all about firearms and shooting.

I explained to Jack that we had four rifles and something else, like an American Express card, that we never left home without. I have been an NRA-certified instructor for the past 20 years, even teaching the subject to school-age children before it became "politically incorrect." I even started an in-school Fur, Fish, and Game Club, in which I taught reloading, mounting scopes, fly tying, archery, etc. Jack told us he was a long-range shooter and in the Army was trained as a sniper (one shot, one kill). He told me he had set shooting records back in the 1960s that still stand to this day. We told Jack we had an AR15 24" target stainless steel barrel with a 1-7 twist, a Ruger 22-250 Remington, a new-caliber .204 Ruger, along with a .17 HMR. Jack asked what we had for scopes, what barrel twists, what contour and length, the grain of bullets and type of our reloads, what powder, primer, case, and almost any other question that he could think of. Jack knew more about rifles and ballistics (the science of projectiles in motion of interior, exterior, and terminal ballistics) than all of the major reloading manuals off the top of his head.

Most Club members did not know that he held a FFL license and owned Midwest Magnum, a gun shop that sold "Premium Quality Sporting Rifles for Rich People." He closed the shop

about ten years ago to concentrate on “taking it easy” a bit more. Jack only carried high-end, custom shop, one-off caliber rifles, and had all the supporting scopes, bullets, primers, gun powders, dies, reloading equipment; you name it, he had it. And he didn’t just carry the products, he knew how to use them, how they performed, and how to get the best groupings for whatever range target you would be shooting. And believe it or not, I know for a fact that he also has Brenda set up with some very nice bench-rest competition .22 rifles, and some wonderful .45 caliber handguns for mounted shooting.



Jack was also very fair when determining his direct-to-customer prices. His goal was to make a small profit, but his main focus was trying to get the best gun possible into the customer’s hands, keeping within their budget. His reputation quickly spread, and a well-known sporting goods store, Scheels, put up a notice in their gun section that stated, “We will match our competition’s prices, excluding Midwest Magnum.” With that being said, if Jack offered a gun or gun package for a really good price, there was no negotiating. He once

told me that he offered a customer a gun below his own wholesale price, and the customer countered him several hundred dollars less. Undaunted, Jack picked up the gun, returned it to the rack, and sat down and began to read. He stayed there until the customer left. Jack would also refuse to sell guns to individuals that he felt an uneasiness when questioning them as to their



intent for usage. More than one time he asked the customer(s) to leave and not return. He had character, principles, and morals, and wasn’t afraid to stand up for them.

When I went out West for a hunting trip in 2018, I stopped in Grundy Center for a day or so, and spent time with Brenda, Elyse, and Gretchen. Jack took me to his gun shop and he mounted some high-end Leupold scopes on some rifles. I opened the trunk of my car and got out my Sako 22-250 rifle with a Swarovski scope. Since my rifle is a hunting rifle, I do not want a “light” trigger. Jack always liked the Remington 40 and Model 700 actions, and preferred one-half to one-pound triggers for long-range shooting up to 1000 yards. I watched as Jack worked on the trigger of another rifle. He was a fine gunsmith; delicate, precise, and accurate.

As most of you may know, Jack took a trip to the Northeast to evaluate tractors for awards (September-October 2017 issue pages 8-19). Jack stayed with my wife, Maria, and I, and we drove 659 miles to visit 12 Club member collections. Jack drove 1,056 miles (one-way) from Grundy Center to Belvidere. We visited people and places in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York on Long Island. At one of the visits, a man came up to Jack and told him that he was the guy that driven the steel-wheeled tractor across the turf at Hawkeye College in 2002. Jack looked right at him and said, “If you would have listened to and obeyed the rules, you wouldn’t have gotten yourself into a problem.” The guy agreed, said he was willing to get past it, and the rest of the visit was great. One thing about Jack... he didn’t hold grudges, and was always willing to extend an olive branch. Many people who pushed the limits in the past have chosen not to accept it, even to this day. It’s a difference of character.

Jack always had his briefcase with him with supplies, paperwork, and whatever he felt necessary to get the job done and return home safely. He had never visited the East Coast before, and on our way back we saw the approach to the George Washington Bridge to New Jersey was at a standstill. It is common to have many people wandering around in the five or six lanes of the highway selling flowers, newspapers, wanting to wash your windshield for money, and selling items. As a couple of people came down our lane of stopped traffic, Jack wanted to know what was going on. I told him we’d be fine as long as we kept the doors locked, windows rolled up, didn’t look at them, and waved our finger back and forth as to say, “No.” Needless to say, that didn’t set very well with him.

Jack did get to know my father and my family. Last year, I lost my brother, and one month later my father. Now Jack. Three very important guys to me; may you rest in peace. All of you will be missed.

## Dave Sutherland Sr. Dave Sutherland Jr.

Iowa

Jack Cherry; a one-of-a-kind individual that can never be replaced. I, being in business for over 50 years, have never met anyone quite like Jack. Yep, perhaps a bit intimidating at first, but he, my son, and I built a relationship that will be cherished for years. And matched by no other relationship to this day. More than likely forever.



We are fortunate enough to be his print partner for well over 20 years, and am sure you have all heard of good client/vendor relationships, but there will never be one such as what the Sutherland's and Jack Cherry had, EVER. We were fortunate enough to meet 12 to 15 times a year. Yes, business was discussed (and trust me, we always knew where we stood), and then it was anything and everything else. From government, to wildlife, weather, stocks, precious metals, guns, crops, predictions, you name it, we discussed it. And you know, Jack pretty much had an answer for it all, to the point my son and I might go back to the office and Google what we discussed just for kicks. Guess what... he was always right!! He literally was a walking encyclopedia. Never have we run across a person so intellectually astute — about everything — you name it; he knew it.

There were times that we both bucked huge snow drifts to meet at the Big T in Tama, Iowa (our favorite spot), to pass along proofs or files, and of course, visit. Hell, we did not care if there was a blizzard outside; couldn't get much worse in an hour!! So we visited. And, the Big T was the location of our last meeting, a moment which is locked in my memory forever.

We knew Jack and Brenda as an amazing couple and Brenda gives Jack credit for making her the strong woman she is today. And she is, as many of you may know.

Good luck at carrying on the tradition, Brenda. Put your own trademark on the magazine as your husband would expect, and rest in peace my friend Jack; you will be forever missed.

## Lee Sackett Minnesota

Hello everyone. I wanted to take this opportunity to share a couple "Jack Cherry" stories with you. I think for many, Jack was an intimidating person. He certainly was to me, especially as I was first getting into the business of restoring tractors. My wife's grandfather, Ken Anderson, was already a long-time subscriber to *Two-Cylinder* and I had read many of his old issues before I became a subscriber myself.

The first time I applied to be an exhibitor at one of the Two-Cylinder Expos, I diligently filled out my application and hoped that the tractor I was submitting would be accepted. The problem was that the tractor restoration was not completed yet. I had attended at least one Expo prior to that, and knew firsthand that this was a show like no other I had attended. The quality of tractor restorations at Expo was intimidating. I hoped that mine would meet those standards. Since the tractor was not complete by the application deadline, I submitted photos of the tractor in-process. I hoped that those pictures would show that I was doing a quality job, but needed Jack to trust that it would meet Expo standards. I sent in the application and waited. One day, the phone rang. It was Jack Cherry and J.R. Hobbs, both calling to talk to me about my application. These guys were legendary to me, and having never met either of them before, I was both honored and terrified to have them both at the other end of the telephone line. "Mr. Sackett, we've been talking about your application," they said. "How are you coming along with the project?" I told them that it was coming along nicely and that I was confident that it could be done in time for the Expo. I also added that I

would be happy to send progress pictures as I go to assure them that it would be acceptable. "We don't need you to do that," they said. "We think you should bring it the way it is, and show people a project that is incomplete. We think that would be a good way to give people a better understanding of what goes into a quality restoration." I can still remember feeling the wave of relief pass through me as I heard these words. This was an opportunity to do something new and different at the Expo, and they were asking *me* to do it. We talked a little bit more about the tractor and then I asked what they would think about me trying to finish the project *at* the Expo. Both agreed that would be a great addition to the event. Many of you will recall that this became a tradition at each subsequent Expo up until the last one. Jack didn't have to take a chance on me, a young guy from southern Minnesota that he had never met before. I believe he recognized how hard I was working to meet the Two-Cylinder standards, and also recognized that my project could be a valuable addition to the show and help the hobby as a whole. It certainly did help me out as I began to grow a successful restoration business.

As we got to know each other, Jack dropped the "Mr." from "Mr. Sackett" and would greet me on every phone call with just "Sackett!" I tried not to bother him with too many questions, but when I would get stuck on something and need some help, he was always willing to help me out. A lot of times it was regarding decal placement or muffler color or something cosmetic like that. I'd call and tell him what I was looking for and he would then start to share stories and information about something that didn't quite answer my question. I would listen as he told me about his work with the John Deere Foundry, or about how rare a particular tractor was. Then after a few minutes, he would circle back to my question. He would typically say, "Well, I'm looking at four different pictures of a model (whatever it was) tractor and in all four pictures, it looks like they had silver mufflers on them." While Jack was telling me stories, he had been digging through his archives, pulling out information so that he could properly answer my question. The amazing thing to me is that he must have known where all that stuff was, and it was all within close reach. Jack had a ton of information in his brain, but what he didn't know or remember, he knew how and/or where to find the answers. His love and passion for all things John Deere was unmatched by anyone I've ever met. He was still compassionate, though. He held professional restorers like me to a higher standard to individuals that restored their tractors on their own. There were several occasions where he did not award one of our restorations an "Expo-Quality" Award until we changed something that he felt was in error. I took those criticisms as learning experiences, and my company became better at restoring because of it. I have never had such interaction with an expert on any other brand of tractor; however, I have applied the "Expo-Quality" standards to all of our restorations, across all brands.

The best compliment I ever received from Jack was at one of the Expos. I was laying on the floor underneath the tractor we were assembling at the show when Jack walked up with another guy. It turns out that the "other guy" was the head of the John Deere Archives. "This is the guy you need to have work

on it,” said Jack. “It” was the “Dain” or “All-Wheel Drive” Tractor, the mother of all John Deere Tractors. Jack Cherry personally told the John Deere Archives that my company should be chosen to restore the “All-Wheel Drive,” and that’s just what happened. That introduction and endorsement led to us doing four projects for Deere & Company, also including the experimental “B” Tractor. I thank Jack for setting this in motion, and helping our company to become what it is today.

We will continue to carry his legacy on, and continue to preserve John Deere products, and promote the hobby of collecting, restoring, and using their equipment for future generations. We will miss you, but will never forget you.

## **Graeme Howden** New Zealand

Hi Brenda and Team/Family,

Sorry to learn that Jack passed away in July. My thoughts are with you and the girls. A friend in America messaged me soon after he passed away to let me know.

Three of us from New Zealand came over to Waterloo in 1987 to attend the first Expo in conjunction with Deere & Company’s 150th Anniversary. From memory, Jack was thinking about taking an early retirement from John Deere at that stage, so I was aware that he had acquired tenure.

We spent time with Jack back then and met some of his family. We spent more time together back in 1995 when I brought the Chamberlain tractors over from Australia for the Expos at Grundy Centre.

I wish you all well as you move forward to a new stage in life and will be thinking of you. Best regards.

## **Rex McKee** Iowa

Jack Cherry was friend of mine. He was someone I valued for his knowledge on firearms which was extensive, but also for his insights on life, politics, public events, relationships, education, and pretty much whatever we talked about. His insights were honest and direct and usually useful. Jack was definitely an independent thinker.

Jack was someone I admired. He was able to educate himself to be an expert in metallurgy and later start a popular magazine. I traveled to Idaho with him and was impressed with his respect for the land and wildlife on his property on the Salmon River. He seemed to know a lot of the people of Salmon by name and personality. We occasionally shot rifles together and I always felt compelled to share results with him when I had good results. I still do.

I will miss Jack. He was a unique, and valued part of my life. He was my friend.

## **Mrs. Jack Cherry** Brenda Harrenstein

Jack Cherry. His name alone stirs deep emotions, from the heartfelt and deeply emotional tributes that appear on these pages, to the vehemently disdainful attacks that seemed to never end throughout his stellar John Deere-related career.

Jack was brilliant and enjoyed sharing his knowledge with

others. He was extremely intimidating, although not intended, simply because of the confidence he had in his capabilities and through life experiences. Many saw it as arrogance, but the majority of those who created the never-ending problems were driven by sheer jealousy. Problem-makers wanted to control him and became angry when they found it to be an impossible task. Jack was the man at the top, the pinnacle of the vintage John Deere hobby. Whether it was a single person, a group of individuals, or an entire organization, Jack Cherry magically became the target. And the sad part was, Jack wasn’t being the only one attacked. I was too.

Nobody *really* understood Jack, but I did. I was the one who was blessed to see his innermost persona. The key was to just let him be himself. He possessed a quick wit, but was very charming (when need be), and was at ease in a top-level meeting dressed to the nines as he was scrudding around in worn-out jeans with his signature Cabela’s safari-style shirts, t-shirts, and loafers or high-top sneakers. He was a kind and caring person; often donating in private to those in need. I never saw him once pass by a Salvation Army kettle without contributing a significant donation.

Jack forced me out of my shell and showed me places that I would have never seen left to my own devices. He explained photography in detail: composition, lighting, exposure, etc., and was an extremely patient teacher. He mentally sparred with me, seeing how far I could keep up with him, and then would be oh-so-smug when he could top the conversation off with the last tidbit he had been holding on to. We both shared a love for shooting and the outdoors. He taught me about architecture and great architects. He possessed an extensive vocabulary and helped to broaden mine. I was the tomboy farm girl that he wasn’t quite sure how to handle, but he would often ask me farming questions when working on an issue of *Two-Cylinder*. And, he was always amused that I operated farm machinery and commercial lawn mowing equipment, and that I did my own landscaping. He thought nothing was impossible for me and I felt the same about him. He provided sound guidance, encouraged me to do things I felt were overwhelming, and was my pillar of strength.

Jack was a very humble man, extremely proud of his accomplishments, but never boastful. He conducted himself with dignity, but if a situation arose that needed to be handled, he acted quickly. Those who broke the rules reaped the punishment. He worked hard and played hard, but he did it on his own, without financial assistance from anyone. Jack was a perfectionist and expected that same trait from those who worked for and were close to him. He made it very clear when J.R. Hobbs began working for Two-Cylinder that his mantra of, “Tell them what they want to hear,” would not be tolerated. Jack was dedicated to providing the most accurate tractor publication available.

And why did Jack guard our married/family life so tenaciously? He knew that no matter what personal choices he made that they would be met with scrutiny and criticism. He knew that he (and we) would be singled out, even though other married publishing teams are exempt. The fortitude and conviction that Jack possessed was unlike anything I had ever known. I am 64 years old and exactly half of my adult life was spent with Jack. And what a fantastic journey it’s been; it ended far too soon.

Without him, I would not be the person I am today.